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Myrtle  
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From Page:  
1c  
4/28/2007  
63027



# 135 Summit takes look at issues of aging, care

BY JAN A. IGOE  
*The Sun News*

The country's assistant secretary for aging and the state's lieutenant governor outlined a program Friday aimed at the challenges of the nation's growing senior population.

Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer outlined "Choices for Independence: Strategies for Modernizing Long-term Care" with Josephina Carbonell, U.S. assistant secretary for aging, at the 2007 S.C. Leadership Summit at the Grand Strand Senior Center.

The multifaceted program empowers health care consumers through access to information and resources, gives high-risk individuals more choices and encourages healthy lifestyles and disease prevention.

With 78 million soon-to-be-senior baby boomers deciding where to spend their golden years, South

## Seminars

- Coastal Carolina University Center for Active Aging and Retirement has developed free seminars open to professionals and the public. Call 349-6531 for reservations.
- Waccamaw Hospital in Murrells Inlet | Pilot program 2:30-3:30 p.m. June 6
- HealthFinders at Coastal Grand Mall | Public education seminar 2-3 p.m. June 14

See **RETIRE** | Page **6C**



Sun News  
Myrtle  
Beach, SC  
Circ. 52029  
From Page:  
6c  
4/28/2007  
63027

## RETIRE

*From Page 1C*

Carolina ranks fifth nationally for in-migration of the 65-plus crowd, and Horry County is the top choice for seasoned surf, sun and golf lovers.

Although some arrive in robust fiscal health and new senior communities can jump-start rural economies, others may outlive retirement plans and exhaust their caregivers.

Television cameras filmed the presentation for Retirement Living, a new TV channel geared toward the rapidly rising senior population. About 200 invited guests who specialize in elder services were in attendance.

Study after study shows seniors overwhelmingly prefer to age at home, and recent changes to the Older Americans Act support cost-effective, community-based long-term care options.

The act, reauthorized last

year, coordinates and funds various services, including transportation, nutrition programs, health care referrals and other services. The main change is the creation of options and a move toward more home-based care, reversing a long-standing bias toward institutional care, Adams said.

During Bauer's tenure, the state has secured about \$7 million in federal grants, according to Frank Adams, S.C. Office on Aging deputy director for public information. Several initiatives have received national attention.

The Administration on Aging Web site will highlight the state's Senior Data Cube on Tuesday, during Older Americans Month. The cross-referenced research database uses multiple sources of information to assess the success of state-funded programs.

The state has also attracted a dozen board-certified geriatric specialists, who are in short supply, by offering loan forgive-

ness. Dr. Bill Logan was among the first to accept the offer.

The former internist left a high-paying position for a two-year fellowship at Duke University. Now, he is geriatric director at Greenville's Center for Success in Aging, where two-hour multidisciplinary evaluations — that include family and caregivers — are the norm.

"The average visit time is seven minutes to break even in a private-practice office," Logan said. "By doing high-quality evaluation up front, we can prevent crises of care that end up in our emergency rooms."

Community Aging and Disability Resource Centers have opened in key service areas with three more, including a Pee Dee center, set to open by summer. The centers provide information and benefit counseling to seniors and those with disabilities.

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